

Ignes Speculatorii :

O R,
CONSIDERATIONS

Upon the Use of
BEACONS.

In a LETTER from *Dublin*
to the B----p of *B---r.*

— de Vertice Lampas
Ardet—



L O N D O N,
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FOR
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CONSIDERATIONS

Upon the Use of,

BEACONS, &c.

May it please your L——p,



IN case of the sudden *Invasion* of any Part of the King's Dominions, a very commendable Method obtain'd in the Days of Yore, of alarming the Country by lighting up of *Fires* on the Tops of Hills, and eminent Places, as Signals of an approaching Enemy. In Imitation of which good Old Custom, the

Mayor of a certain Maritime Town (at the time of the late Rebellion) gave Orders for the firing of a couple of Barrels of Pitch upon the Top of the Castle, as a Token that the *Pretender* was within a few Leagues of Landing upon that Coast; and that his Squadron seem'd to make directly into their Harbour. The Ships indeed that occasion'd this *Combustion*, proved to be a Fleet of laden Colliers; yet cannot I for the Life of me accuse the then Ruler of that District as an unprovident Person, or ridicule his remarkable Circumspection and Forecast, as a fruitless Precaution. On the contrary, when he deliver'd up his Accounts at the End of his Mayoralty, no one more willingly allow'd the same than my self. Not one single Article did I dispute; no not the very Five Pound which he had charged for *Beaconage*. Tho' I must confess, I understood not the Import of that *Word*, till I casually observ'd that he had unfolded the mysterious Term in an Explanatory Note on the Margin of his Book; where
these

these Words were written; *An Expence for Pitch to alarm the Country.*

There was but one fawning, stump-footed, canting old Sot of an *Alderman*, that shewed the least Uneasiness at the honest well-meaning Mayor's Accounts. And this same dissatisfied *Grumbletonian*, being a Person that generally talk'd much, but little to the Purpose; at length broke Silence; and, after the manner of a true Hypocrite, began his Harangue in a soft and tickling kind of Panegyrick upon the general good Conduct of our late *Governour*; thank'd him for his great Care of the Corporation; for the Encouragement he had given to *Vertue*, by his own exemplary Behaviour, and for his discouraging of *Vice* and *Profaneness*, by putting the Laws in Execution against all obstinate and enormous Offenders; for his Vigilance in suppressing of all manner of Tumults and Insurrections, when any such threaten'd the Peace and Quiet of the Neighbourhood; and for his frugal Management of the Publick Cash,

or

or Town-Stock, that had pass'd through his Hands during the time of his being in Office. But in the End, all this *Hony* was turn'd into something else; into something that was of the same Colour indeed, but of a quite different Nature, and Taste, and Smell, as one might partly guess by the Steam it sent forth. The pretended *Dove* began to shew that he had a Gall: His Feathers had Edges keen enough to have slit a Man's Gullet; and, notwithstanding the oily Words of this old *Smooth-boots*, it plainly appear'd that he had Swords and War in his Heart.

In short, after he had flourish'd a considerable while upon the excellent Qualities of the late *Mayor*, he fell by degrees to Threats, and at last to downright Scolding, and calling of Names: And all this, as far we cou'd perceive, upon the sole Account of the *Article* of *Beaconage*. For God's sake Sir (said he) why was all this Waste made? Why must you needs light up two Barrels of Pitch,

Pitch, when one might have serv'd the turn? Sure you was minded to make a Blaze sufficient to frighten all the good People in the Neighbourhood, instead of calling them in to our Assistance, in Case the *Chevalier* had in reality been so near our Coyy-holds as you foolishly imagin'd. Therefore let me tell you Mr. Wiseacre (continued he) That such a Goose-cap as you ought in my Judgment to be punish'd as a *Publick Incendiary*; or at least be Prosecuted at the common Expence, as a suspicious Person, and as one who had Designs of setting the Town on Fire under the Pre-text, forsooth, of Acting for it's Defence and Security.

This scurrilous Deportment of the Splenetick Old Gentleman began by this time to stir the Choler of the whole Fraternity of Aldermen, Common-Council, Constables, and all the worthy Members of that ancient *Body-Corporate*. For by some sarcastical Expressions which he had let fall, they found Themselves too

too sensibly reflected upon; and that their own Reputations were wounded thro' the sides of the late Mayor. They remonstrated in their turns how Obnoxious he had made himself to the whole Body by his Ill-conduct, and uncharitable Surmizes in the Affair under their present Consideration. And how flagrantly (even before his Admission as a Member) he had Vilified and Defamed the ancient Rights and Priviledges of the *Town*. How, at the same time, he left no Stone unturn'd to Advance himself to some Publick Station in the Corporation; which at long run he happily effected, and by his fawning and cringing, and time-serving Tricks, got himself chosen *Alderman*. They reminded him of his insolent Carriage after his Election; and of his transgressing the Rules of Charity, by Misrepresenting the Words and Actions of the whole *Brotherhood* in general, and more particularly of the honest Gentleman, whose Accounts they had now before them. And in the Conclusion unanimously Voted

ted him a Disturber of the *Corporation*, and unworthy to wear the Robes that belong'd to him as a Badge of his Office. And having maturely considered the good Intentions, and honest Meaning of the Defendant, not only allow'd his *Bill for Beaconage*, but gave him the Thanks of the House for the Vigilance and Care he had shewn thro' the whole Course of his Mayoralty.

Upon this there ensued a general Huzza, in token of the Approbation of all the unprejudiced Spectators. And, the *Chairman* having dismiss'd the Assembly, *Old Hunks* was obliged to sneak off without Replying to the Charge; having only the ill-natured Satisfaction of cursing all his Opponents, and swearing Bloodily that he wou'd use all his Interest to have their *Charter* taken from them; Nay, tho' he was sure to lose his own *Gown* and *Freedom* by the Bargain.

Methinks by this time I behold your
L——p turning up the Whites of your
B Phari-

Pharisaical Goglers with a seeming Indignation against, and a more than ordinary Concern at the Conduct of the vile Hypocritical *Wretch* here before Us.

Never make any wonder at it Man;

————— *Mutato Nomine de Te*
Fabula narratur. —————

You are the very Person who thus cry out with the utmost Rage against all who have the *Zeal* to oppose your darling *Latitudinarian Principles*. You palpably *Invade* our *Religious Rights*; and yet if the *Convocation*, a *Snape*, a *Law*, a *Sherlock*, a *Cockburn*, a *Trapp*, a *Cannon*, or any honest Clergyman or Layman is at the Expence of lighting up a *Beacon* as a Signal of an approaching Enemy, what a Coil do you keep! How do you Thunder out your *Anathemas*, your *Bruta Fulmina*; and Curse all that stand in your way by Bell, Book, and Candle.

Nor

Nor are you content to disturb the Repose of his Majesty's Liege-People with your *Own* Works alone, with those I mean that bear your awful Name in their Titles; but when any doughty Combatant has the Assurance to mount the Stage in your Behalf, you fail not to Halloo him on with *Prefaces* and *Postscripts* of an unconscionable Length. So that if one might guess at their Use by the vastness of their Dimension, one wou'd imagine you design'd them for *Winding-Sheets* in case any of your *Seconds* should fall in the Conflict.

But are these *Heroes* of yours in good earnest such terrible Creatures that they must be stroked, and sooth'd, and caress'd, for fear they should turn upon their Keeper? Or are they such bashful timorous *Souls* that you are forced to clap them on their Backs, and spit in their Mouths in order to raise their sinking Spirits?

You seem hereby, in my humble Opinion, to Copy after some of our famous *Cock-Matchers*. And, if a favourite *Jewel* is to enter the Lists, you set him down upon the Pit with a *Bonne Grace*, and a long Preface serves as a Prelude to the ensuing Combat. When the Battle is ended, if you find he has proved a *Good Heeler*, you are no less ready to sound your Trumpet in a tedious and unharmonious Postscript: *Et ita insulsissimis Labris quasi Podicem illius deoscularis.*

At other times (as if you had quite lost the Eyes of your Understanding) you Act the Part of a *Blind Cock* ; and Peck, and Sparr, and Flusker at every thing that does but touch you : And, like *Ragotin's* Turn-Style, deal your undistinguishing Blows with equal Fury amongst Friends and Enemies ; and if the Passenger takes not a more than ordinary care, 'tis Ten to One but he receives a Thump on the Guts that shall make him keck.

A fair Opportunity here offers it self for numerous Citations out of your late Theological Pieces to make good this heavy Charge. *Works of Theology* did I call them! Forgive the heedless Mifnomer: For an ordinary *Ballad-Singer* may with equal Confidence put off his Party-Songs and Madrigals for *Anthems*, and spiritual *Hymns*. Your Sophisticate Performances are in almost every Body's Hands, and have sufficiently tired both Me and all your Readers: I shall therefore forbear spoiling any more Paper with odious Repetitions of such fulsome Stuff. For I am sensible it wou'd be as nauseous an Undertaking, as the swallowing a Bolus a second time after the Stomach had discharged it once already. And we know of a certain Persons Writings which, notwithstanding we place them in the most advantageous Light, do still appear to be but one large Blot of Iniquity.

Me:

Methinks those *Gentlemen* who undertake to write Answers to some of your *L---*p's Labours have a more disagreeable Providence to go through than the *Maîtres des Basses-Oeuvres*, or *Gangers of Vaults*; who, tho' employ'd in the basest Occupation upon Earth, yet meet now and then with a *Watch* or a *Piece of Gold* to make them some small Amends for the Pains they are at in keeping the rest of Mankind Sweet, and Clean, and free from Infection. I cannot but acknowledge that the highest Commendations are due to the Publick Spiritedness of those excellent Persons abovenamed, who employ some of their leisure Hours in the offensive Drudgery of searching into the *Excrements* of your Brains, in order to prepare proper *Antidotes* for the *Poison* they are sure to meet with. But I must own it even grieves me to the very Heart to think how sadly they bedawb themselves with raking into so much Dirt, and Mud, and Nastiness. And yet, alas! after all their trouble

ble and Pains, what strange Treatment do they meet with in your L——p's Replys? Their best *Prescriptions* are decried as *Quack-Recipès*, and themselves hereby abused as a Company of *Charlatans* and *Empericks*.

And what, my good L——d, have you at length quite forgot your once darling *Maxim*, That whoever attacks us in our Rights and Priviledges, is in a State of War with us, and may be treated as our Ancestors did the Wolves that heretofore infested our Country; or as We, their Progeny do a mad Dog, whenever he comes in our Way? For once then I will confess myself of your L——'s Mind; and will grant you, that when a mad Dog, or *mad any thing else*, is broke loose into our Streets, all the good People in the Neighbourhood ought to be up in Arms against him. And if Canes, and Oaken-Plants and Paring-Shovels will not stop him in his Career, I shall no longer blame any well-meaning *Vulcan*, who, in his Zeal for the Weal-Publick shall leave his Forge,

Forge, and run out of his Shop with a red hot Iron in his Fist to oppose the foaming Cur that has thus put all the Parishioners into a bodily Fear. Or, shou'd I chance at any time to pass along the Streets, and find my self in Danger of being overturn'd in my Chair by some intoxicated Ruffian; I shall for the future readily excuse my Footman, tho' he should exert himself in a more than ordinary Zeal in the Defence of his Master. I am confident, that upon the like Occasion, your L——p (notwithstanding all your pretended Moderation) wou'd secretly commend the Fellow's Courage and Honesty, tho' his Looks, and Words, and Blows shou'd shew him to be Heated beyond his usual Temper; nay, tho' he should not only cudgel, and soundly baste the Roasting-Pieces of the Aggressor, but also singe his Beard, and Whiskers, and Perriwig with his Flambeau.

But why must the whole Nation be all upon one Man's Back, says your L——p? I might here, not improperly, make the

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same Reply as a late Person of Quality did to his *Valet-de Chambre*, upon a Complaint he made to his Lordship; That he was hated by all the Servants in the Family: How the P---x then have you Behav'd your self, replied his Honour.

Pluck up a good Heart Man; you have more Friends than perhaps you imagine. And so long as there are *Deists*, *Socinians*, and *Free-Thinkers* in the Land, never make your self uneasy, as if you was in Danger of wanting Advocates and Admirers. And if one happens to encounter a *Dissenter* of any Denomination, he shall not fail to espouse the Cause of that Good Man the B---p of B---r. Ask him how he likes your late *Sermon* and *Defences*, and he shall immediately applaud your wonderful Performances; and will tip the Wink as if he had no small Hopes of your speedy *Conversion* to his *Scēt*. A Quaker, not many Days ago, seem'd almost cock-sure of his *Friend Ben*: He had observ'd (as he told the

Company) through the dark Fogs of your cloudy Labours a kind of glimmering *Light* to break forth ; and, notwithstanding your present *Obscurity*, had hourly Expectations of your *Illumination*.

If the *Friends* shou'd not be balk'd in their Expectations (and who knows how far the *Devil* may tempt one ?) Remember, before the Time comes, that Purity of Spirit does not consist in a Sanctify'd Look or Habit : And that to be extrinsically conspicuous, is by no means a certain Symbol of intrinsical Excellence. No ! for the blackest *Fiend* is still a *Wicked Spirit*, tho' he may shine a while in the borrow'd Lustre and dazling Form of an *Angel* of *Light*. As the *Devil* that looks over *Lincoln-College* was still an ugly Monster with Tail, and Horns, and cloven Feet, notwithstanding his being *New-whiten'd* against the *Publick Act* ; tho' I doubt not but he was more stared at upon the Account of his *Light Colour'd Suit*, than if he had continu'd in his old Original *Black Livery*.

But

But without all Question, you begin to think me insufferably tedious ; and that I exceed the Bounds of an Epistle. Be that as it will, I have your L——p's Permission to abound in my own Sense, as you do in yours. And the *Liberty* of the *Pen*, tho' never so scandalously misemploy'd, is in some Peoples Opinion, *A Branch* of the *Liberty* of the *Subject*.

I shall take Leave of your L——p with a *Petition*, That you will be pleas'd to fling this into the Fire as soon as you have perused it; out of a fond Opinion that I shall hereby see my self placed upon the same Foot with those Writers who acquire a high Price and Value to their Works, upon the sole Account of their being *burnt* by the *Common H——man*.

I am, without Postscript,

Or further Ceremony,

Your L——ps, &c.

J. S.

Dublin Feb. 10th 1717.



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